DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 052 623 EM 009 084

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TITLE Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project.
PUB DATE 71
NOTE 9p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Cable Television, Community Involvement, *Community Programs, *Program Descriptions, Programing (Broadcast), Television, Video Equipment, *Video Tape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS *Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project

ABSTRACT

A non-profit corporation, called the Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project (S.C.C.S.T.P.), is proposed that would produce videotape for the purpose of intra-community communication. The corporation would use portable videotape equipment to record a variety of community programs, such as an ecological history of the Monterey Bay area, the weekly meeting of the board of supervisors, community service messages, and public school student videotape productions. The S.C.C.S.T.P. would enable the local cable television company to meet the Federal Communications Commission order compelling all community cable systems with over 3,500 subscribers to begin their own programming of local community origination as of April 1, 1971. The Project would also provide a variety of means of direct community involvement including a media and television workshop open to the public, an equipment rental service, and a videotape library. A production budget is proposed, and the videotape hardware necessary to implement the project is listed. (JY)

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SANTA CRUZ COMMUNITY SERVICE TELEVISION PROJECT

Conceived by:

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Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project

Table of Contents:

-- Introduction - Philosophy

-- Methods of Direct Community Involvement

-- Generalizations of Content

-- Statement of Standards

-- Budget Considerations and Projected Output

Appendix

Hardware Considerations

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

A non-profit corporation, which will be a legal entity by January 15, 1971, is being created to produce television videotape in Santa Cruz for the purpose of intra-community communication. The impetus for this project is generated by pronouncements by the Federal Communications Commission which have established a policy that compels all community cable systems with over 3,500 subscribers to begin their own programming of local community origination as of April 1, 1971. This programming may be financed by local paid advertising. The goal of the F.C.C. rule and the Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project is to develop a greater awareness by the community of its own potentials and problems.

Most of the larger cable companies, including Pacific Teleprompter (17,000 subscribers,) are building studios in response to the ruling. This is a good development, but unfortunately it leaves a vacuum which S.C.C.S.T.P. hopes to fill. A studio situation is a form well suited to talk shows, news programs and interviews, but because of weight (140 Lb VTR) and equipment complexity problems, it is difficult to get videotape recording equipment out into the community where the action is and action is the essence of the medium.

For instance, it would be rather difficult to protray the dynamic interrelationship between the land and sea ecologies of the Monterey Bay Area without showing the physical environment that we are talking about. This is where portable equipment pays for itself many times over. A 21-pound videotape recorder and camera (battery operated) could be taken out in a boat, carried down a narrow cliff, basically go wherever the cameraman does and provide a complete sound and picture record of what he experienced. This porta-pak is small and unobtrusive enough to capture experience not as a performance, but as an occuring reality.

It is becoming increasingly important for us to know not only what we think but also what we do. For instance, a program on what the average family does that pollutes the local environment and what that family can do to reduce its pollution output, would be of enornous value.

The necessary hardware (cameras, videotape recorders, etc.) is being assembled along with a group of Santa Cruz people who possess the necessary technical and creative expertise to produce and teach others to produce quality community programming. A Videotape workshop will be set up by these people to educate the community in the techniques and some of the possible beneficial uses of the medium.

Budgetary needs will be met by paid advertising of local businesses during S.C.C.S.T.P. air-time which would be purchased by the corporation from the local cable company. Prior to April 1, 1971, community financial support will be needed to purchase equipment and pay expenses. The money could be paid into a business trust fund from which it could be withdrawn only for certain specified reasons. This money would be paid back once the corporation was financially self-sustaining (refer to Appendix B.) Once the equipment is secured and expenses are being paid, the community can avail itself completely of this service.

PHILOSOPHY

The Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project (S.C.C.S.T.P.) has as its goal the opening up of whole new areas of intra-community communications utilizing the medium of T.V. videotapes. Once the format of T.V. content moves away from network stereotypes of what a program should look like, the humanistic potentiality of T.V. experiences becomes limitless.

Videotape experiences can be designed to rise above the level of stereotyping and rhetoric. A point can be reached where people will dwell on similarities of toals and mutual interests rather than dwelling on differences that lead to polarization and defending points of view. For example, both the left and right of the political spectrum agree on the need for local control of community affairs. This is common ground where differing political philosophies can come together to work for improvement of the community.

Ecological concern cuts across all boundaries. Rather than standing on opposite sides of the street yelling at one another, all people in the community can be unified around ecological activity.

The video productions will communicate the idea that as members of the community we all have to deal with this given situation regardless of our role or status. We all have a stake in community improvement.

Beyond passive participation in viewing community television, the community will be actively involved in the production of the videotapes. The beauty of this medium is that production brings all types of people together - young, old, black, etc. - cooperating in an activity of mutual interest. When people complete the tape, they invariably look back on the communion that developed between themselves during the activity.

When people work toward the goal of communicating a problem or situation to others, they learn more about the positive and negative aspects of the community. In order to communicate the reality, one examines more critically and develops greater awareness.

Community re-appraised by members of the community can be a positive, contructive impetus for social change. The individuals in the community are opened up to what they can do personally and immediately to improve the community.

METHODS OF DIRECT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SCCSTP

1) A Media and T.V. Production Workshop will be created by the corporation open to the entire community. The workshop participants will be taught the hardware and software knowledge necessary to create their own videotape production. People from various service organizations, for example, could then produce their own message to be shown on the cable station.

   There are many myths about T.V. production that will be overcome in this workshop. To produce a quality tape, one does not require a B.A. in electronics, ten years of production experience, or expensive

hardware. We have taught 7th grade public school children in a few hours how to operate the equipment and produce interesting pieces of communication.

2) An equipment access center will be established where anyone can come and rent, for a nominal fee, portable taping equipment to produce a message they wish aired to the community.

3) A tape library and viewing area will be created for the public use possible at the Santa Cruz Public Library. Every tape produced by S.C.C.S.T.P. will be available and indexed. A playback machine will be available to the interested party.

4) Information on the coming week's programming will be published in the local news media. All new tapes will be shown at two different air-times during the week for the viewer's convenience.

GENERALIZATIONS ABOUT PROGRAMMING CONTENT

The videotape productions will as closely as possible approximate the given reality. Network documentaries rely heavily on narration that spoon-feeds pre-digested abstractions of what the viewer should be experiencing in a poorly pedantic manner. We want our viewers to draw from the experience what is most relevant to their own experiential background.

The community tapes will aim towards the alienation of no one. It is our hope that anyone who participates in community television will leave the experience with positive feelings. The viewer will be placed in a situation where he can learn about the social, cultural, political and human aspects of the community of which he is a part.

Content will be no problem because every member of the community has some message, service or expertise that he would like to share with others. In very short order the community will be contacting the production people with ideas and requests.

There are some content ideas, however, that have particular interest to the production team and give insight into what can be done:

a) Ecology - A videotape ecological history of the Monterey Bay Area. The program would visualize changes caused by man altering the bay environment. The bay's present state and projected future would also be demonstrated.

b) The Santa Cruz Migration - New people to the area would be given an opportunity to share their experiences of how they have adjusted. They might wish to relieve their frustrations as a newcomer by voicing them. New people to the community would be immediately involved in a community project. An excellent welcoming device that might shed fresh insights on our community.

c) Tape Weekly Board of Supervisors Meeting - Renew the town meeting concept.

d) A Day in the Life of a Santa Cruz Peace Officer - No editing to package an image - a natural flow with audio being street sounds, car radio, dialogue, etc., employing small battery operated taping unit. The viewer can begin to empathize with the policeman as another human being.

e) Create a Volunteer Community Renovation Service - Advertise with time-lapse visual of a house changing in appearance before your eyes. The Huckelberry Finn "let's all help whitewash the fence" feeling could be created in the community.

f) A Disaster Relief Service - If a fire occurs and a family is on the street, visualize the problem on T.V. and ask for community assistance (e.g., a place to stay overnight.)

g) Community Cultural Notes.

h) Two-Minute Community Service Messages - The spot would be totally visual - showing the service the organization performs and who to contact for further information.

For example, Goodwill Industries Ad (employing the technique of time-lapse photography.) Goodwill people removing an old stove from the garage of a person who has no use for it. Cut to scene of stove being repaired and renewed. And final scene of yound couple on a limited budget happy to fulfill their cooking needs for $25. Visual at end states who to contact if you have items that can be re-cycled.

i) Public School Student Videotape Productions - These can improve community relations between schools and local taxpayers. We already have several secondary schools working on this project under our guidance. The tapes will also provide insight into how the students view their school environment. This approach is better than protest marches and building take-overs.

j) Hundreds of Humanitarian Organizations wanting to inform the rest of the community of their role to gain increased support and serve more people.

k) Re-Cycling - People are becoming more aware of the fact that things can be shared - a communal activity. Visualize church-related junk shops, used book stores, newspaper collections, garage sales, etc., pointing out that much more re-cycling can occur if people know how to go about it.

STATEMENT OF STANDARDS

The Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project will strive to maintain a high level of integrity and honesty. No image or information "packaging" will occur and we will aim at alienating no one.

All people appearing on videotape will be shown the tape on which they appear. If they find it objectionable, their part will be destroyed. Should they view their role with favor, they will be asked to sign a release form.

Hopefully, everyone who participates in S.C.C.S.T.P. willleave the esperience with good feelings. Instead of finger-pointing and name-calling, we will get down to the task of improving our community.

Advertisers will be given certain pre-conditions of good taste under which they must operate if they sponsor S.C.C.S.T.P. programming.

Our basic and most important interest is to help the people of the Santa Cruz community.

PRODUCTION BUDGET

The following budget gives a breakdown of the costs involved in producing a programming output of six individual half-hour community videotapes a week. The production crew will also devote one and a half hours per week to the media and T.V. workshop open to people of the community. One recognizes the relative low cost of the production of community input as compared to average local T.V. station cost. The average in-station production is $1,000 per minute of finished tapes.

Weekly Budget:

Production Crew Salaries	$1,000
Expenses (gasoline, etc.)	250
Magnetic Tape (consumed)	160
	$1,410 per week
Cost to create library viewing center (hardware)	$800
Cost to create equipment access center (hardware)	$1,300

Note: Hourly cost of cable television air-time at present unknown.

APPENDIX # 1

22 December, 1970

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN NATIONAL VIDEO SYSTEMS AND THE SANTA CRUZ COMMUNITY SERVICE TELEVISION PROJECT

The Santa Cruz Community Service Television Project, through its representative Herbert Allan Frederiksen, agrees to purchase the videotaping hardware as listed on the following page of this agreement.

The purchase price to be paid by the Santa Cruz Community Television Project is $2,993.

The terms of payment are 10% down ($299) paid this day, 22 December, 1970.

The balance of the purchase price ($2,694) will be paid within a 60-day period from the date of this agreement.

_____ _____

Herbert Allan Frederiksen,
Representative of S.C.C.S.T.P.

Authorized agent for National
Video Systems, Inc.

_____

WITNESS

8

APPENDIX 2

RE: VIDEOTAPE HARDWARE BEING PURCHASED FROM NATIONAL VIDEO SYSTEMS, INC.

(Note: All equipment Panasonic except where specified.)

QUANTITY	MODEL NO.	DESCRIPTION	SERIAL NO.
1	an 69V	19" VTR Monitor	FX 0210059
1	TR 20	13" TV Monitor	68622143
1	WV 350P	Camera	11838E
1	WV 220P	Camera	12489E
1	WV 600P	Special Effects Generator	10667B
1	M 67	Shure Microphone Mixer	
2		Tripods with Heads	
1	Marshal	15-75 mm rear-operated zoom lens	230720
1	NV u75	R.F. Converter	
1	NVB 31	Video Amplifier	
1	WV 7063P	Triple CCTV Monitor Unit	
1	LQM 10A	Colortran 10" mini-lite	B13216
1	NV 3020	½" Video Tape Recorder	

TOTAL PURCHASE PRICE:	$2,850.00
TAX:	143.00
	$2,993.00

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT NEEDS NECESSARY TO MEET ALL PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS OF S.C.C.S.T.P.:

1	940-H I	Monochrome Video Processor	$1,390.00
2	Sony	Portable ½" Video Recorders	2,400.00
		PLUS ABOVE EQUIPMENT	2,993.00
			$6,783.00